



Division of Food and Recreational Safety

April 9, 2020

Operating U-pick Produce Activities While Keeping Consumers Safe

As our nation works diligently to halt the spread of COVID-19, it remains a priority to have a safe and reliable food supply, including access to fruits and vegetables. Farms that allow customers to pick their own produce are an important source for consumers and must do their part to protect the health of customers and employees.

This is *not* business as usual. It is critical that all participants in pick-your-own activities follow the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidelines to minimize risk of infection with the virus. We want to be sure that the agriculture industry complies with federal and state recommendations for good health.

Under the [Safer at Home order](#), issued by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) at the direction of Gov. Tony Evers, farm and produce stands—including farm markets and U-pick operations—are considered *essential* business operations and allowed to remain open (see Section 13.b. in the emergency order).

However, these businesses **must**:

- Close all seating intended for consuming food.
- Close self-service operations such as salad bars, beverage stations and buffets.
- Cease any self-dispensing of unpackaged food by consumers (except for at grocery stores).

- Limit employee in-person meetings whenever possible, and switch to virtual meetings, teleconferences and remote work.
- Comply with all [DHS guidelines for businesses](#).
- Practice social distancing of at least 6 feet between all individuals to the maximum extent possible.

After discussions with state agriculture industry leaders, the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) makes the following recommendations to farms offering pick-your-own produce, or selling produce at farm stands or farmers markets:

- Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
- Maintain social distancing between everyone on the premises.
- Schedule appointments to limit the number of customers picking at one time.
- Allow adults, teens and older children to pick only while under farm supervision or after safe harvest instructions.
- Offer ordering online or over the phone.



- Implement pickup, drive-thru or delivery options.
- Eliminate samples, eating areas and non-picking on-farm activities.
- Limit employees to those performing essential duties.
- Sell pre-weighed packaged items to limit food handling and keep customers moving.
- Assign separate people to handle products and money. Employees should use hand sanitizer after every transaction.
- Regularly disinfect frequently-touched surfaces.
- Ask customers and employees showing signs of illness to stay home.
- Use signs, websites and social networks to communicate and promote new procedures.

Questions for DATCP can be sent to safeproduce@wisconsin.gov.

Additional COVID-19 resources for businesses and employers, including cleaning and disinfection protocols for frequently touched surfaces, can be found at the [DHS website](#).



Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
 Division of Food and Recreational Safety
 2811 Agriculture Dr., P.O. Box 8911, Madison, WI 53708
<https://www.datcp.wi.gov>